

ED Dolphin Program – Your Ticket to a Career in Submarines!

By RADM(Sel) Paul E. "Sully" Sullivan, PEO Submarines, PMS 450

You don't have to be nuclear power trained to work on submarines as an Engineering Duty (ED) Officer. There is another route – the ED Dolphin Program. This program has been around since 1973, and has been providing highly-trained EDs for submarine overhaul, repair, design and construction since its inception.

Why?

The ED Dolphin Program was instituted in order to train a cadre of officers who bring the ED perspective to the demanding world of nuclear submarine overhaul and construction. The exacting discipline of working on nuclear systems, and the uncompromising standards of the SUBSAFE Program require officers who have earned a warfare qualification in the submarine specialty. Since only a few officers lateral transfer to the ED community from the submarine line (1120) designator, an alternate qualification was necessary. The ED Dolphin qualification is more focused on design, overhaul, and technical standards than on submarine operations. With the ED Dolphin Program, the Navy gets a mix of line lateral transfers from the 1120 community and ED Dolphin qualified officers. This provides a suite of complementary skills for the submarine business.

How?

The ED Dolphin qualification program normally takes about two years to complete. The NAVSEA instruction which covers the details of the program is NAVSEAINST 1520.2B and includes the following elements:

(1) **Satisfactory completion of a**



radiation and submarine physical examination.

(2) **Completion of the Submarine Officer Basic Course (SOBC)** at the Submarine School, SUBASE New London, Groton, CT. This is a 13 week course in submarine operations and systems that all submarine officers complete.

(3) **Completion of a patrol and refit cycle** on a deploying SSBN. This at-sea phase can be tailored based on the needs of the officer, the ships available, and the needs of the Navy. Candidates should expect to execute the complete patrol/refit cycle (**about 13 weeks**) or equivalent experience. During the underway portion of the program, the candidate is expected, as a minimum, to successfully complete qualification for Diving Officer of the Watch. Special arrangements can be made for female officers pursuing the ED Dolphin qualification.

(4) **Approximately one year of experience** working on overhaul or construction of submarines at a naval shipyard or Supervisor of Shipbuilding.

(5) **Assistant Project Superintendent Systems Class completion** at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard. This three week school provides training in the design, maintenance and modernization of submarine nuclear propulsion systems.

(6) **Completion of a qualification journal.** The journal is the record of the candidate's path to qualification. It consists of sec-

tions on operations, design, and maintenance. Each section has a set of assigned questions and a set of practical factors. When properly completed, this notebook becomes a great reference for the officer throughout his or her career.

(7) **Walk-through examination.** Prior to the oral board a walk-through examination is conducted aboard a submarine by a submarine qualified officer. This allows the candidate to demonstrate in a submarine environment his or her knowledge of systems, components and operational concepts.

(8) **Interviews.** Generally, ED Dolphin candidates spend a day or two at NAVSEA Headquarters for interviews with key submarine codes, including technical codes, program management offices, and Naval Reactors. These interviews are often combined with the oral board, but not always. The intent is to give the candidate a personal view from the key decision makers of the Navy's submarine programs.

(9) **A pre-oral board** is held at the candidate's command to ensure he or she is prepared for the oral board conducted at NAVSEA Headquarters.

(10) **Oral Board.** When all the requirements are complete and upon the recommendation of the candidate's commanding officer, the candidate's journal is reviewed and graded at NAVSEA Headquarters. After receiving the journal back with comments, the candidate is scheduled for an oral review board.

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CAPT John Woodburn (an Aviation Maintenance Duty (AMD) Officer) heads N432, our Aviation Readiness Branch. Five CDRs and one LCDR, all aviators or AED/AMDs support him. Embedded in N432 is the responsibility for reporting current readiness within OPNAV.

N433, our Fleet and Battle Group Training Branch is headed by CAPT Dana Rowland, an ED with extensive program management experience. Although the billet is coded for an unrestricted line officer (URL), CAPT Rowland's programmatic expertise is ideal for standing up the requirements assessment methodologies that will be crucial to this branch's success. Several CIVPERs and four URL officers round out the staff of this branch.

At present we are fully engaged with Fleets in developing the Baseline Assessment Memorandums (BAMs) which when complete comprise the fundamental statement of "the requirement" with respect to resources necessary to achieve and support the desired readiness posture.

If you want to understand "the big picture", do a tour in OPNAV. Nowhere else can you get a better view of or be more engaged in shaping the Navy's future, and in doing so, your own future.

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The board consists of two submarine qualified EDs and one Line Submarine Officer (1120). Successful completion of the board is the last step of qualification.

Why should I consider this program?

The program is rigorous, but it is absolutely unique in the

Navy, and certainly in the ED Community. It is your opportunity to earn a warfare qualification AS AN ED, and is UNIQUELY tailored for direct application to your job.

Is there a future in this qualification?

The submarine business is certainly on the upswing. Consider the following programs going on right now:

- **Overhaul.** It is time to refuel and overhaul the Los Angeles Class. There are 35 refuelings/overhauls scheduled over the next five years. This major undertaking will require a cadre of EDs qualified in submarines in order for us to be successful.

- **SEAWOLF Program.** *USS Seawolf (SSN 21)* is going through OPEVAL. *USS Connecticut (SSN 22)* has just finished her PSA and is readying for deployment. *Jimmy Carter (SSN 23)* is still under construction, with a hull plug being added to convert her into a multi-mission platform. She delivers in 2004.

- **VIRGINIA Program.** The lead VIRGINIA class submarine delivers in 2004. Three follow ships are already under contract. These ships are being built at both Electric Boat Corporation in Rhode Island/Connecticut and Newport News Shipbuilding in Virginia. We are only at the beginning of a 30-ship class. The design has not quite finished, and there are major class upgrades planned for the future. Plenty of work at both headquarters and the field.

- **Other Programs.** The Navy has about 56 attack submarines and 18 SSBNs. Maintaining, overhauling, upgrading, and converting these ships is a huge undertaking. Note that the Navy is considering conversion of four OHIO Class SSBNs to the SSGN role, and is actively study-

ing replacement of the NR-1 research submarine. We will also be building the second Advanced Seal Delivery System (ASDS).

Where can I learn more?

There are about 43 ED Dolphins on active duty. Look for people with the "SU0" qualification designator in the *ED Directory*. Speak to any one of us. There are two flags, 17 CAPTs, 16 CDRs and eight LCDRs. We serve in the following types of billets:

- IMA Repair Officer
- Shipyard Commander and Department Heads
- Supervisor of Shipbuilding
- VIRGINIA Class Program Manager (PM) (PMS 450)
- Attack Submarine Program PM and Assistant PMs (APMs) (PMS 392)
- Deep Submergence Program APMs (PMS 395)
- NAVSEA Subsafe Program Director (SEA 92Q)
- NAVSEA ship design managers

There are two qualified female ED Dolphins, CAPT(Sel) Mary Townsend-Manning (SEA 92Q) and CDR Geraldine Olson (COMSUBPAC).

There is flexibility in how some of the requirements of the program can be satisfied, so don't be discouraged if you think you can't meet all the requirements as stated in the NAVSEA instruction.

If you are interested in hearing more, contact your detailer, Ms Patsy Morgan, or one of the "Subba Bubbas" listed below:

- RADM(S) Sullivan - PMS 450
- CAPT Dullea - PMS 392
- CAPT Butler - ASN RD&A
- CAPT Heffron - SEA 92B
- CAPT Mason - SOS Groton